

PRINCIPLES OF PALEONTOLOGY

EES 207
Spring 2009

Instructor: Penny Higgins
Office: Hutchison 209B

Office hours: MW 11:00-12:00 (or by appointment)

Lectures: MWF 10:00-11:00 in Hylan 105
Final: Wednesday May 6 at 12:30pm

Required Textbook:

Principles of Paleontology,
3rd Edition

M. Foote and A. I. Miller
ISBN 0-7167-0613-X

Grading EES 207:

First Exam (15%)
Second Exam (15%)
Third Exam (15%)
Final Exam (15%)
Exercises (30%)
Quizzes (10%)

Grading EES 207W:

First Exam (13%)
Second Exam (13%)
Third Exam (13%)
Final Exam (13%)
Exercises (23%)
Quizzes (10%)
Final Paper (15%)

About the class:

This course will be a general introduction to the field of paleontology. About 2/3 of the class will be spent on the basic principles of paleontology and the discussion of the nature of the fossil record. The remainder of the class (usually on Friday) will focus on phyla of organisms most commonly seen in the fossil record, starting with unicellular organisms through to vertebrates.

Paleontology is considered a subdiscipline of geology, and as such, students will develop a basic understanding of fundamental principles of geology. The fossil record will be used to refine these principles. There will be at least one, if not two, field trips wherein students will be able to see fossils in their "natural environment."

Given that fossils are the remains of once-living organisms, it is understood that paleontology requires a good background in biology. Students taking this course can expect to be taught some basic biological principles, especially as they pertain to hard parts of organisms. It is not required that students already have a background in biology to take the course; however, students can expect to have a healthy understanding of biology when they are finished.

There will be exercises approximately weekly, three 'quizzes,' three hour exams (non-cumulative) and a final (cumulative). Students taking this course for upper division writing credit will also need to write a paper. While perfect attendance is not required for this class, it is suggested and will improve your grade.

If you have special needs or problems, please come see me as soon as possible. I am happy to work with you, but tend to get annoyed if you make special requests at the last possible moment (especially regarding ANYTHING toward the end of the semester).